FEAR THE DARK

Nostalgic Dungeon Crawl

THE UNDERGROUND TERRORS

issue 2 : undead monsters

INTRODUCTION

You should have played the first three Quests from issue number 1, granting the players few rewards and improvements. Then you can read the following text aloud to the players.

You ventured into the nest of goblins and orcs, you braved the lair of the infamous Uruk and received the gratitude of the Merchants' Guild and their gold coins. Your company grew stronger, and you learned to explore and to fight together, overcoming the war bands of green-skinned monsters.
Then you faced horrors like never before: animated corpses in form of skeletons or zombies, and even mummies crawling slowly but inesorably towards you, animated by pure evil and the desire for human flesh.
Treasure after treasure, dungeon after dungon, your reputation grew beyond the little towns of this remote province, and even in the Free Cities they heard of you: the strong barbarian who frightens even the orcs, the powerful dwarf master of traps, the smart elf armed with sword and magic, and the great wizard with a useful spell always ready.
The Free Cities Council has asked you to investigate the works of the emissaries of Chaos; too many of them have appeared in this land. They use orcs and goblins, sometimes fimirs too, to bring destruction to the human land and to plunder. But especially they work to keep the humans busy with minor struggles... while the Chaos warriors work on their terrible plans, whatever they may be, and the Chaos sorcerers violate the threshold between life and death. Be ready, for you may cross that threshold too!

FEAR the Dark is a fanzine dedicated to HeroQuest - the popular fantasy board game of the 90s which introduced so many of us to dungeon crawling and miniatures.
This is going to be a complete reboot of the game's background and story. It will remain faithful to the original material but it aims to bring a different feeling to it, so that there will be no overlapping with the stories of Mentor, Morcar and Zargon. Moreover, the 'zine will contain new quests which can be played by any group of players. Old players will find new maps and new missions, and new players will be allowed to start from zero.
Everything presented in this fanzine is written to be played starting with issue number one, and will slowly expand beyond the original box and miniatures. It will also attempt to provide a modular system; it keeps the traditional rules and will progressively add little, indipendent pieces to them. You will be able to use all those rules, or just some of them.

Materials

This second issue contains more and more of the undead and chaos monsters, expanding beyond the first few quests which were based on orcs and goblins. Introducing monsters slowly, and making them feel frightening and terrible, is part of what makes the game great and gives players a sense of exploration and growing experience.

Miniatures

In issue number 3, planned for Juanuary 2021, I will again use only the original miniatures. But afterwards, I will add a few more miniatures and monsters in the new quests I will publish. From issue number 4 the story will "reboot" again, allowing a new group of heroes to start a new game.

Cards

A card with the rule for Fear of the Undead is included. New rules can be referenced in the Summary of the Rules section, but I find that cards with special rules can come handy during the game.
I keep them next to the board, so that players can refer to them, while the GM uses this booklet.

Fear of the Undead

This little new rule was added in the last Quest of the first issue of the fanzine. Since there were a few undead only in that last Quest, I envisioned the heroes being potentially terrorized by them: this would allow these monsters to act (move and attack) the first unlucky heroes within range. But our heroes are now ready to face this sort of threat: so I would suggest to use the rule only **the first time for each type of undead**, in each new Quest. Skeletons therefore would have a chance to strike first only the first time they're placed on the board, zombies only the first time, mummies only the first time. This would still make the first encounter with them, in each Quest, a little more dangerous, without making these monsters too strong.

Credits

HeroQuest is once again a Hasbro trademark. This fanzine claims no ownership of the aforementioned trademark, and is instead a personal project made available to the public as a tribute to the old game.
Maps are made using the HeroQuest-Excel-Quest-Creator tool.
The cover image is picture of some painted monsters, and on the backcover is a picture of the Fear of the Undead new rule, as a printable card.

Summary of the Original Rules

This is a summary of the original rules; new original rules are presented in dark red color.

Turn

Default order: Barbarian, Dwarf, Elf, Wizard, Game Master (GM).

Movement and Action

In a turn, you may move and then act, or act and then move. You cannot make an action in the middle of a movement. Actions are:

† Attack
† Cast a spell
† Search for treasure
† Search for secret doors
† Search for traps
† Disarm a trap

Looking

Looking is **not** one of the basic actions. It happens automatically as heros move. Everything in their **line of sight** must be placed on the board.

Doors

If a hero stops next to a closed door, they can ask the GM to open it, and place on the board the content of the room. Opening doors does **not** count as an action; it's a part of the normal movement. Open doors **cannot** be closed.

Movement rules

A hero can move less of the 2d6 roll, and pass other heroes if allowed by the other player. It is **not allowed** to move diagonally, through walls, through blocked squares (walls), over adversaries, or backwards in the same turn. It is **not allowed** to end a move sharing a square (exception: this is allowed on stairs and in pits).

Attack

You may attack an adjacent enemy, **not** diagonally. Some weapons allow to attack from a distance or diagonally, or change the number of dice to roll. An attack scores **one hit** for every Skull rolled. One attack per Turn is allowed.

Defend

The defendant rolls its Defend dice, and blocks one hit for every **white shield** if it's a hero defending, or for every **black shield** if it's a monster defending. Roll the Defend dice every time someone attacks you.

Body Points

Every hit not blocked, is subtracted from the Body points. When they reach **zero**, the hero or monster is **dead** (a hero may drink a potion already in their possession or use a healing spell if they have not already made an action).

Cast a Spell

A spell requires a **visible** target. After casting the spell, **discard** the spell card and the same spell cannot be used until the next quest. The line of sight is **blocked** by walls, closed doors, and other miniatures (heroes or monsters).

Search for treasure

Treasures are **only in rooms**, not in corridors. Every hero may search independently on their turn, and only once by each hero for each room. You may search for treasure only when the room is **empty** of enemies.

Treasure deck

If there is no special treasure declared by the Quest Book, shuffle the Treasure deck and draw a random Treasure card. Valuable treasure cards remain in possession of the hero, while other cards are returned to the deck.

Wandering monster

Place it next to the searcher, and attack immediately. From the next turn, the monster moves and attacks normally. If there is no space, place it anywhere in the room, without making an attack.

Search for secret doors

Secret doors may be **in rooms or corridors**. Every hero may search independently on their turn, in the room or corridor they're in. You may search for secret doors only when the room or corridor is **empty** of enemies. No need to search more than once: **all** secret doors in the room or corridor are revealed as soon as the first hero searches for them. Secret doors are **closed** until a hero opens them, and work as normal doors.

Search for traps

Traps may be in **rooms, corridors, or chests/furniture**. You may search for traps only when the room or corridor is **empty** of enemies. If there are traps, the GM will tell you what they are and where they are.

Trigger a trap

If a hero moves on a trap square, without checking, the trap is triggered. If a hero searches for treasures, without checking, the chest/furniture trap is triggered. Monsters do not trigger hidden traps.

Disarm a trap

To disarm a trap you must possess the **appropriate tool kit**; the Dwarf on the other hand may do this even without tools. A hero must announce the attempt and move to the trap square, then roll 1 Combat die. If you roll a Skull, you trigger the trap and suffer its consequences; any other roll means you disarmed the trap and it's gone forever. The Dwarf fails and triggers the trap only when rolling a black shield.

Traps rules

Here is the list of the default traps, how they can be avoided or disarmed, and what happens if they are triggered by the heroes.

Pit traps

This is declared as a weak floor by the GM, and may be **jumped or disarmed**. If triggered, suffer 1 Body point damage and fall into the pit, ending your turn; place a **pit trap tile** on the board, which cannot be removed. The pit may only be jumped at this point. **In the pit**, a hero may search for treasure or secret doors as if in a room. Attack and Defend rolls are done with one die less (but not less than one, and this applies also to monsters). A hero or monster may move out of the pit in the next turn.

Falling Block trap

This is declared as a dangerous looking ceiling by the GM, and may be **jumped or disarmed**. If triggered, roll 3 attack dice and inflict 1 Body point of damage on each Skull; the **falling block tile** is placed on the board and becomes a permanent block which cannot be removed. The hero must decide in which direction to make a last step (ahead or back), before the turn ends.

Spear trap

This is declared as suspicious by the GM, and may be **jumped or disarmed**. If triggered, roll 1 attack die and inflict 1 Body point of damage on a Skull. This ends the hero turn. When triggered once, a spear trap is gone and nothing is placed on the board.

Chest/Furniture trap

This is declared as looking suspicious by the GM, and may be **disarmed**. It is also avoided by not searching for treasures. If disarmed, it is possible to look for treasures without triggering traps. If triggered, follow its instructions.

Jump a trap or a pit

You may jump traps which have not been triggered, or may jump an open pit. You cannot jump over a fallen block: this is like a blocking wall. To jump, you must have enough movement left to end in the square after the trap; if you do, roll 1 Combat die. If you roll a Skull, you trigger the trap (or fall into the pit) and suffer its consequences; any other roll means you avoided the trap or pit.

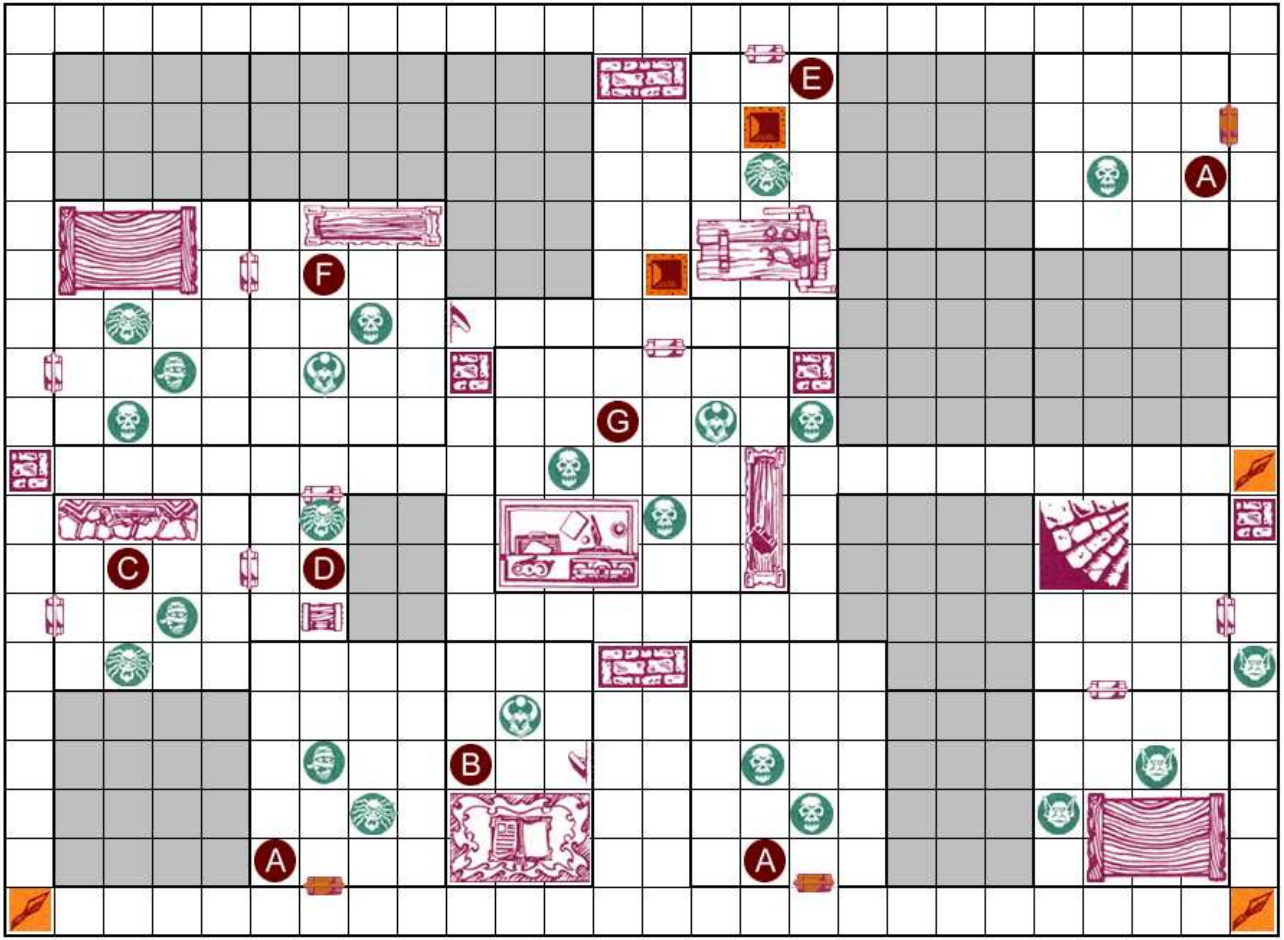
Fear of the Undead

When placing an undead (skeleton, zombie, mummy) on the board, or a group of them, the GM rolls a combat die. If the GM rolls a skull, the undead(s) may move and attack now, before any other hero's action. Then the game resumes normally.

Use the rule **the first time for each type** of undead (skeleton, zombie, mummy), **per quest** (skeletons cause fear the first time they appear, then no more until next quest; zombies cause fear the first time, etc.).

Your Rules

Use this space to make notes about your own rules, so that you have a written record for you and the players.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QUEST 4

The Wizard's Laboratory

When you raided Uruk's lair, a dying wizard was kept prisoner by the fimirs and you probably encountered a Chaos warrior working on the wizard's alchemical notes. The Free Cities Council is growing worried; more and more of these Chaos emissaries are found working with orcs, goblins and fimirs. Perhaps the dying wizard discovered something and you are offered a 100 gold coins reward for every piece of useful information that you may recover from the old wizard's laboratory.

GM – Describe the corridors as spiraling down, deep into the ground. At at every turn, the tunnels go deeper, towards the bottom center of the laboratory. All colored doors (marked with A) are not with a trap but blocked; they cannot be opened, but will open when triggered (see room G). The Council will pay 100 coins for each secret from room B-C-D.

A These doors are blocked; put them on the board and keep them closed.

B The Chaos warrior is studying ***the wizard's notes*** about how to give additional strength to dead bodies.

C Searching for treasure will reveal in the fireplace ***some half burned notes*** about training zombies.

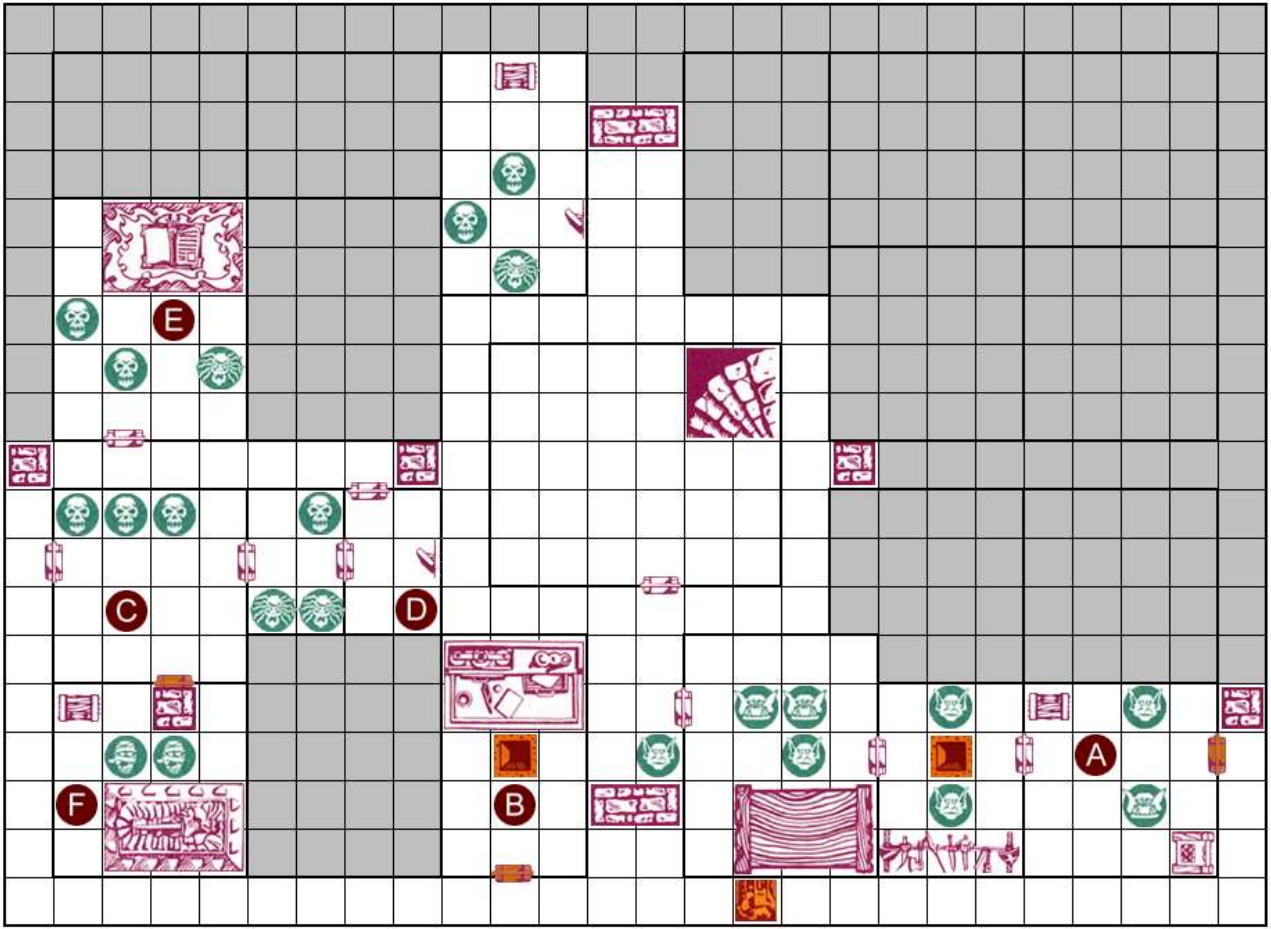
D The chest contains 50 coins and ***the wizard's notes*** of received payments from a Chaos sorcerer.

E There is no treasure in this room.

F Searching for treasure will reveal the Talisman of Lore in possession of the Chaos warrior (see the matching Artifact card).

G If the heroes enter this room, open the doors marked with A on the entire dungeon. All monsters from those rooms will converge, at their speed, towards room G, attacking the heroes which will be on their way out. There are 50 gold coins in a drawer, and there are notes about the location of an old Archmage tomb, which will lead to the next quest.

Wandering monster: Skeleton – and remember to use the Fear of the Undead rule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Quest 5

The Tomb of the Archmage

You have heard rumors of the tomb of a powerful Archmage, long gone but whose rich treasures and secret and forbidden knowledge are still the dream of every hero or adventurer. The tomb stands above the ground as a simple, black obelisk; underneeth dark mouldy stairs bring you down into the darkness. You've been warned that goblins and orcs have made the first chambers into their lair, but it's not the green monsters you're worried about.

GM – If the heroes have the notes from room G of the previous Quest, they can begin this adventure right away. Otherwise a local guide will bring them to the entrance of the tomb for 50 gold coins paid in advance. If the heroes do not have enough coins, they can return to this Quest and pay the guide when they'll be ready.

A The treasure chest contains 40 gold coins. The door is protected by a poison needle that causes 2 Body points damage if not disarmed.

B If any heroe searches for treasures before discovering and disarming the pit trap, will fall into the pit. The alc. bench contains a Potion of Healing.

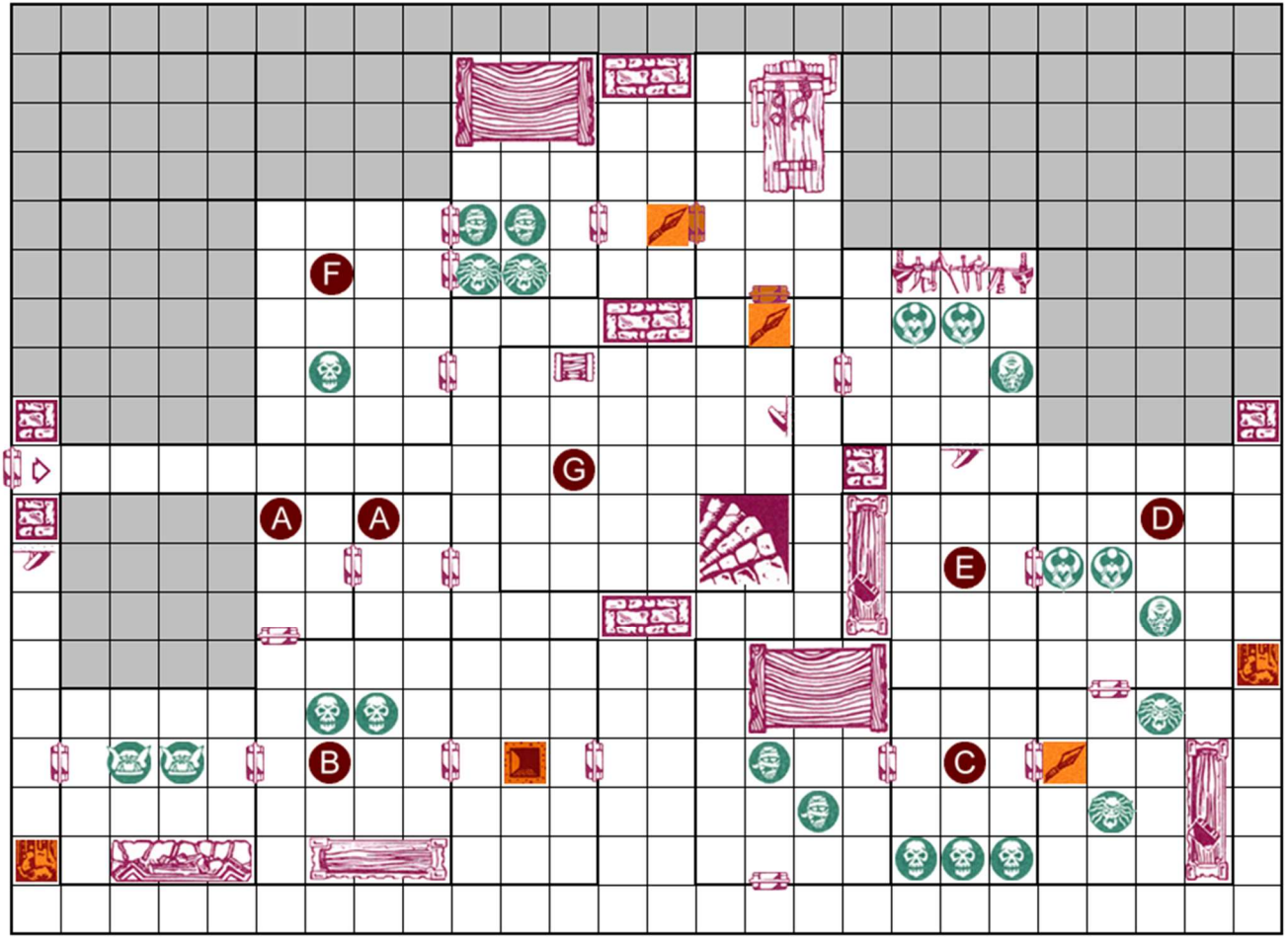
C The skeletons will not move until at least two heroes are in the room, or are attacked. The colored door opens on a thick stone wall which blocks the way.

D This secret door can be found only from within the room, not from the outside corridor.

E The dead Archmage treasure will reveal as 200 gold coins and a Cloak of Protection. When the heroes defeat the monsters, they'll hear the sound of the wall in room F falling down, and monsters approaching.

F The mummies will pursue the heroes until killed. The chest contains a Holy Water treasure, and here is the real tomb of the Archmage.

Wandering monster: Skeleton - and remember to use the Fear of the Undead rule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Quest 6

The Cursed Palace

Many have tried before you, but the ancient treasure of the Mad King has always remained buried. The dark palace is in ruins and full of undead, their ranks growing stronger with the bodies of dead adventurers. Now there is yet one more reason to enter the ancient palace: a young wizard entered the palace to spy on the emissaries of Chaos which have been seen crawling inside. Free the way for the young wizard to escape and you'll be rewarded 200 coins by the Free Cities Council.

GM – The heroes enter from the door marked with an arrow, at the side of the board. If they can kill all monsters blocking the young wizard, they will receive 200 gold coins when they return. They can keep exploring the palace if they find the stairs in room G. If they do, they can move further down into the darkness.

A In these small rooms there are signs of battle, the remains of two mummies and of three mercenaries. There are no treasures.

B Noises can be heard from the room with the orcs.

C These skeletons are statues and won't move (and cannot be harmed) until the young wizard is rescued.

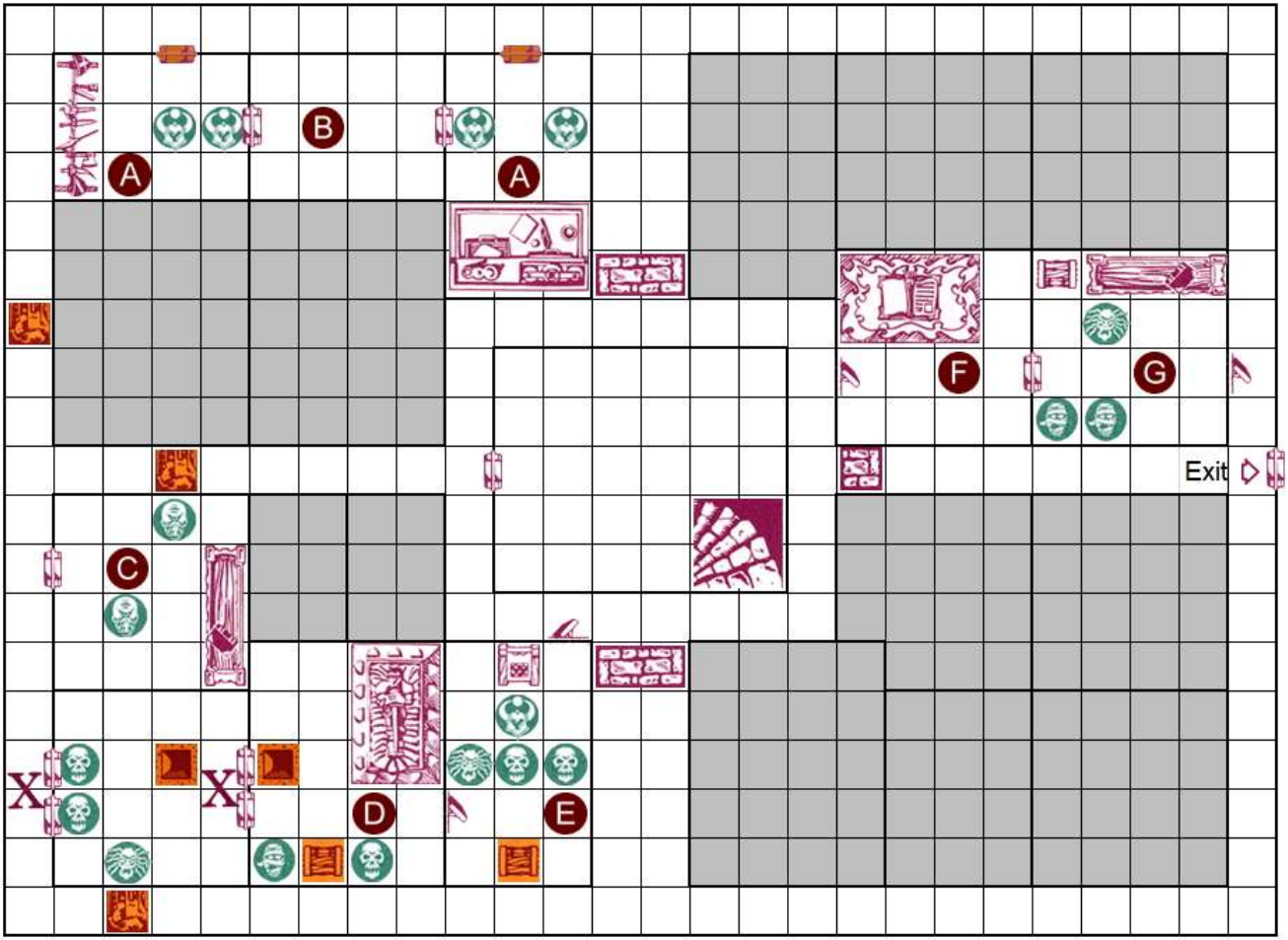
D The Chaos warriors are about to break the door.

E The young wizard is here. The wizard can escape to safety if all monsters in the bottom half of the map were killed, otherwise it must be escorted. He will move with two dice, has 2 Defend dice and 2 Body; he cannot attack and has no spells.

F When the skeleton is defeated, the double door can be opened; when opening a **double door**, both sides are opened at the same moment. Monsters will swarm the room, as double doors are harder block.

G This room can be accessed by the secret door found in the corridor. The chest contains 50 coins and Borin's Armour (4 Defend dice). The stairs lead to Quest 7.

Wandering monster: Zombie - and remember to use the Fear of the Undead rule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QUEST 7

The Mad King's Treasure

After you found the way down, you enter the obscure tunnels under the ancient palace of the Mad King. Here is where you hope to find the precious treasure lost centuries ago.

GM – If the heroes continue from Quest 6, they can have a short rest now: each regains 1d6 Body points, and the Wizard and the Elf recover half of the used spells (rounded down). If instead they exit, fully recover, then enter again, the monsters of Quest 6 will be in place again (but no wizard). Note the usage of **double doors** (marked with X).

A These doors are locked (see room C). These Chaos warriors will call for help from the other room A and the doors of the empty room B will be opened by the monsters in the GM's turn. Searching for treasure will reveal the Spirit's Blade on the weapons rack.

B There is no treasure here. The doors will be opened by the monsters in the GM's turn.

C The key for the two rooms A is here, found searching for treasure.

D The chest is protected by a poison needle for 4 combat dice damage (each skull a Body point). It contains 100 gold coins. The tomb is empty.

E The Mad King appears as a Chaos warrior, in form of a ghost. The undead will attack and the Mad King will escape through the secret door, which can only be opened from the room, not from the corridor.

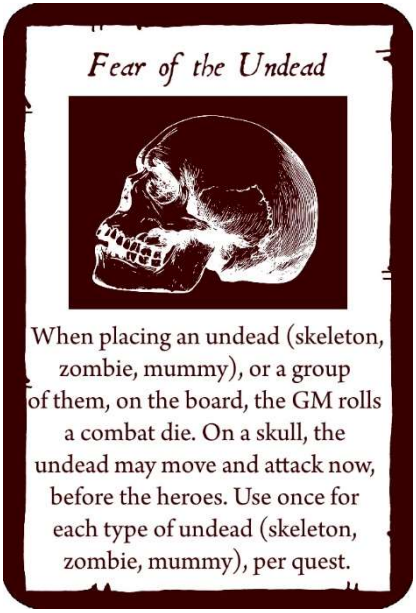
F The Mad King will escape towards this room. The secret door can only be found and opened by the Mad King. In his escape, he will leave it open for the heroes. He will continue towards room G.

G Here is the treasure: 500 gold coins in the chest. In the library, there are scrolls mentioning dark spells of resurrection. The Mad King (who will return in future quests) will escape through the door to the side, which leads back outside, near the palace.

Wandering monster: Zombie - and remember to use the Fear of the Undead rule

FEAR the Dark is a fanzine dedicated to HeroQuest - the popular fantasy board game of the 90s. It's a complete reboot of the game; faithful to the original rules but with a new feeling to it. The 'zine will contain new quests, suitable to new players and to veteran players as well.

The fanzine is hosted at www.daimongames.com/heroquest
Comments, suggestions, collaborations: davide.pignedoli@gmail.com


Fear of the Undead
When placing an undead (skeleton, zombie, mummy), or a group of them, on the board, the GM rolls a combat die. On a skull, the undead may move and attack now, before the heroes. Use once for each type of undead (skeleton, zombie, mummy), per quest.

Issue number 2 – November 2020:

† A short introduction
† A usable summary of the traditional rules
† Three new quests adventuring into the realm of the Undead
† A bonus fourth quest adventuring deeper below
† A simple new rule for double doors